



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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PATRICK ABAYOMI THOMAS SENTENCED IN MARRIAGE SCAM CASE

Tampa, FL - U.S. District Judge James S. Moody, Jr. today sentenced PATRICK ABAYOMI THOMAS to a term of 57 months' imprisonment, to be followed by a term of two (2) years of supervised release. Thomas pled guilty on September 11, 2003 to one count of conspiracy to violate immigration laws and to make false statements in matters within the jurisdiction of the United States, one count of aiding and abetting in the making of false statements in passport applications, and one count of unlawful procurement of citizenship.

THOMAS was the leader of an organized conspiracy which aided aliens, most of whom were illegal residents of the United States, to participate in fraudulent marriages with the intent to obtain for themselves permanent residence status or U.S. citizenship. The conspiracy also involved the submission of false documents to U.S. passport offices, with the intent to obtain passports for persons who were not citizens of the United States and thus ineligible to obtain such documents. The conspiracy continued from at least April, 2001 to May, 2003 in the Middle District of Florida and elsewhere.

The case was investigated by agents of the United States Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, and the United States State Department- Diplomatic Security Service. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Eduardo Toro-Font of the Special Prosecutions Section of the Tampa Division.